A

SERMON,

PREACHED AT THE

CATHEDRAL CHURCH

OF

ST. MARY, IN LINCOLN;

BEFORE THE

RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD

THE LORD BISHOP OF LINCOLN,

AND THE

REVEREND THE CLERGY;

AT

HIS LORDSHIP's VISITATION THERE HOLDEN, ON MONDAY,
THE 17th DAY OF JULY, 1797.

BY

THE REV. WILLIAM HETT, A.M.

Παυλι γαρ εν κοσμῳ λαμπει Τριας, ης Μονας αρχει.

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PREFACE.

WHEN it is ſaid, that the following diſcourſe was delivered in the preſence of the learned and Right Reverend the Lord Biſhop of Lincoln, and a large and reſpectable aſſemblage of the clergy of the dioceſe, I muſt beg leave to ſubjoin, that, ſince that time, it has undergone ſeveral alterations, and that ſome additions have been made to it; but ſtill, that the main ſcope and particular diviſions of the general ſubject remain preciſely the ſame, as when it was on that day offered from the pulpit. I embrace this opportunity of profeſſing, that I

feel a conſiderable ſhare of apprehenſion, relative to the approbation or cenſure, which my ſentiments may meet with, upon a topick in itſelf ſo abſtruſe and momentous, and which I have ventured to exhibit in a point of view, in which I have not ſeen it placed by any one, whoſe writings I have conſulted. Let the periloufneſs of the enterprize plead for the indulgence of the critical and learned reader. And let a ſincere and ardent attachment to THE TRUTH, as I conceive it to ſtand diſplayed in prominent characters upon the pages of the Old and New Teſtaments, and to ſhine forth in glowing colours from the works of Creation, of Redemption, and of Providence, be accepted as the beſt and the only apology I have to offer in defence of that temerity, which

too many may think imputable to me, in laying theſe my ſentiments before the tribunal of the publick. The quotations and references are annexed, not that I might have a pretext for making a diſplay of reading, but with a view of ſupporting a part of my poſitions by the beſt authorities I am able to diſcover in their favour; and in order to prove to ſuch, as may be inclined to queſtion their validity, that, if I am miſtaken, I do not ſtand alone in my erroneous opinions. Whatever effect may be produced upon the minds of thoſe, who ſhall peruſe the following pages, the courſe of reading and the train of reflection neceſſarily attendant upon the inveſtigation, have impreſſed, in indelible characters, upon the ſoul of the author, the following *moſt important* of all truths, and the

chief

chief corner-ſtone of the faith and hope of every real diſciple of Jeſus Chriſt;

Through this vaſt world a *Triad* ſpreads its rays,
Whilſt ONE *o'er all* it's awful power diſplays.

" God made the univerſe, and all the creatures contained therein, as ſo many glaſſes, wherein he might reflect his own glory: he hath copied forth himſelf in the creation; and in this outward world, we may read the lovely characters of *goodneſs*, *power*, and *wiſdom*. In ſome creatures there are darker repreſentations of God; there are the *prints* and *footſteps* of God; but in others, there are clearer and fuller repreſentations of the Divinity, the *face* and *image* of God. According to that known ſaying of the ſchoolmen, *Remotiores ſimilitudines ad Deum dicuntur*

dicuntur veſtigium, propinquiores vero imago." Smith's Select Diſcourſes. Page 253. Edin. Edit.

"I believe that nothing is without beginning but God; no nature, no matter, no ſpirit, but *one only*, and the ſame God. That God, as he is eternally *Almighty*, only *Wiſe*, only *Good* in his nature; ſo he is eternally *Father*, *Son*, and *Spirit* in perſons." Confeſſion of Faith, by Lord Bacon.

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SERMON.

GENESIS I. 26.

And God ſaid, Let us make man in our image, after our likeneſs.

WHEN the Supreme Being condeſcended to make a revelation of himſelf and of his works to us his imperfect and ſhortſighted creatures, he was under the neceſſity of accommodating his expreſſions and manner of addreſs to our limited apprehenſions. Had he not made uſe of the language of men, and adapted the matter of the intelligence he was about to communicate to their mode of conception; however true and excellent in it's own nature might have been the ſubject of his manifeſtations, relative to himſelf and the ſeveral effects of his power, they would have been to mortal man utterly incomprehenſible, and therefore vain and unprofitable.

In the firſt chapter of the book of Geneſis, are recorded a variety of determinations of the Deity, clothed in human language, reſpecting the formation of this world of ours, and of the various claſſes of its inhabitants. All the preceding operations are effected by *imperative* terms, and are expreſſed as the work of the three divine perſons in eſſential union, or of one of them in cooperation with the other two. "And God ſaid, Let there be light, and there was light. And God ſaid, Let there be a firmament in the midſt of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters." God ſpake the word, and things inanimate and irrational were made: he commanded, and they were created. But when man, the Lord of all that had before received exiſtence, was to be called into being, the *deliberative* form is adopted, as being more ſuitable to the dignity and preeminence of his intended properties. "And God ſaid, Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeneſs; and let them have dominion over the fiſh of the ſea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."

earth." A conſultation is, as it were, held of the three divine perſons, in order to frame a creature of a far more exalted temperament than either the rays of light, or than any other the moſt pure of material ſubſtances. Many of the moſt learned expoſitors, both ancient and modern, are of opinion, that, there being a plurality of perſons in the unity of the Godhead, the phraſes, "Let *us* make man;" and, "Man is become as *one of us*;" are uſed to denote this union of eſſence and intention in a variety of divine perſons.* The council of God, as ſome have conceived the higheſt order of angels to be, can be no other than God himſelf. "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counſellor?

* See a ſcheme of Scripture Divinity, by J. Taylor, D. D. in Biſhop Watſon's Collection of Tracts. Chap. XXI.—"And *laſtly*, as for conſulting with, or employing the angels, God ſays here, let us make man in *our* image, and let them have dominion over the creatures: but man was not made in the image of angels, nor have the angels ſuch dominion; and therefore the generality of the primitive Chriſtians, who lived neareſt the times of the Apoſtles, who had occaſion to mention this paſſage, underſtand it as denoting the Holy Trinity, and as repre-

 ſenting

ſellor[a]? Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or, being his counſellor, hath taught him[b]?" None but he, who, by way of eminence, is ſtyled, "Wonderful, COUNSELLOR, The mighty God, the everlaſting Father,* The Prince of Peace[c]."

To man alone, in this lower world, is allotted the high prerogative of being created in the *image* and ſimilitude of God. The nature of the Deity, *as it is in itſelf*, is ſo tranſcendently ſuperior to that of all his creatures, even of ſpiritual beings themſelves, that we muſt not imagine, that thoſe endowments, which we are obliged, by the ſcantineſs of our faculties, to denominate the divine attributes; and which we frame, by withdrawing from him all imperfection, and aſſigning to him all

ſenting God the Father ſpeaking to the Son, or to the Son and Holy Ghoſt eſpecially, becauſe none but the Supreme God is in ſcripture ſaid to have made the world, or to have formed mankind." Collyer's Sacred Interpreter, Vol. I. page 135.

[a] Rom. xi. 34. [b] Iſai. xl. 13. [c] Iſai. ix. 6.

* The Father of the everlaſting age. *Lowth.*

poſſible

poſſible perfection, as far as we are capable of judging what really is ſo; are preciſely the ſame, either * in *kind* or in *degree*, with the imperceptible and incomprehenſible, and therefore undeſcribable eſſence of The Father of Spirits. " For as the heavens are higher than the earth, ſo are *his* ways higher than

* " And although it were too great preſumption to think, that there is any thing in any created nature, that can bear any perfect reſemblance of the incomprehenſible perfection of the divine nature (very being itſelf not predicating univocally touching him and any created being, and Intellect and Will, as we attribute them to God, are, as we may reaſonably think, not only of a perfection infinitely tranſcending any created Intellect and Will, but of another *kind* and *nature* from it;) yet though we are not able to comprehend the excellence of the Divine nature, we cannot frame unto ourſelves a conception of him without the notion of Intellect and Will, though infinitely perfect. It ſeems that thoſe two great faculties, bear a weak *analogy* with and *repreſentation* of the Divine nature. And therefore in that reſpect, Man is the *image* and *repreſentation* of the glorious God, though the diſproportion between him and this his image, be infinitely more than the diſproportion between Cæſar and his image upon his coin, or the ſun in the heaven, and the ſhadow of him in a baſon of water." Hales's Primitive Origination of Mankind, p. 16. See alſo, The Procedure, &c. of Human Underſtanding, by Brown. Chap. III.

our ways, and *his* thoughts than *our* thoughts.[a]" Thoſe excellencies, which the moſt improved of human beings can now contemplate within their own breaſts, or even thoſe, which exiſted in the ſoul, in a far more elevated degree, before the defection of our firſt parents, when extended by the utmoſt ſtretch of the imagination, are ſtill but faint ſhadows and imperfect reſemblances of the infinite and incommunicable perfections of "the high and lofty one, that *inhabiteth eternity*, whoſe name is HOLY[b]. "For now we ſee through a glaſs, darkly[c]?" or rather, *by means of a mirror, in an enigmatical and obſcure manner*. A mirror exhibits the external appearances of objects placed at a certain diſtance from it, but diſplays nothing of the form or ſtructure of their inward ſubſtance. An enigma includes a latent meaning, which it requires a conſiderable ſhare of acuteneſs and exertion to unravel. Hence we may infer, that the nature of God and of ſpiritual objects is involved in darkneſs and obſcurity; and that all the perception of them we are allowed to attain, whilſt our

[a] Iſaiah lv. 9. [b] Iſaiah lvii. 15. [c] 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

view

view is obſtructed by this veil of fleſh, is from a faint and inadequate repreſentation, reflected principally by our own ſouls, and, in ſome degree, by the whole viſible creation. What we are permitted to ſee and to know, by the mediation of created objects, bears a certain degree of *analogy* and *proportion* to ſomething *real* and *correſpondent* in the divine nature. And the more earneſtly we endeavour to purify our thoughts and affections, and to withdraw them from earthly attachments, the more nearly ſhall we be able to copy the ſimilar qualities of our maker, and the more intimate a knowledge ſhall we acquire of his ineffable perfections: till at length, when we ſhall be admitted, "where Chriſt ſitteth at the right hand of God [a], we ſhall ſee face to face, and know as alſo we are known [b]."

The information *, relative to divine and ſpritual objects, contained in the ſacred volume,

[a] Col. iii. 1. [b] 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

* "Nor can it be otherwiſe, ſince the reaſon and apprehenſion of man is finite and limited, and can proceed

lume, is conveyed, for the moſt part, if not wholly, by *analogical* repreſentation, and *figurative* alluſion. Hence the faculties, properties, and excellencies of man, though a finite, imperfect, and mortal being, and though he be compoſed of matter and ſpirit ſo intimately blended, that all his thoughts, words, and actions are more or leſs influenced by both parts of his conſtitution, are ſubſtituted for the inconceivable and unutterable perfections of the firſt cauſe of all things, who is infinite, perfect, and eternal, and who is a pure ſpirit, and, therefore, incapable of any material affection. The creation of man in the image of God, and after his likeneſs, affords a ſure ground for this compariſon of their ſimilar properties. And though there muſt be a very great difference between what is created

only by *analogy*, or the *proportion* which one part of the creation bears to another, but cannot reach the divine nature which is incomprehenſible." Collyer, Vol. 1. Page 60. For a full and complete illuſtration of the *analogical* and *figurative* language of the ſacred writings. See, Things divine and ſupernatural conceived by Analogy with Things natural and human, by Brown: and, A courſe of Lectures on the figurative Language of Scripture, by Jones.

and

and uncreated, finite and infinite, perfect and imperfect; and though the original excellence of our powers muſt be conſiderably diminiſhed by the depredations of ſin; ſtill the primary impreſſion of the divine reſemblance upon the human ſoul is not utterly defaced; even now, in this degraded ſtate, man retains ſo much of his firſt eſſential qualities, as to beſpeak his high original. A temple, though in ruins, ſtill ſtrikes the eye of the traveller with awe and veneration.

Let us now take a view of this majeſtic edifice in its priſtine ſimplicity and grandeur, as it came out of the hands of the divine architect, when every created being was pronounced to be *very good*, without defect or imperfection, and adapted to the moſt uſeful and benevolent purpoſes. "God is a Spirit[a]." In the ſpiritual therefore, that is, the immaterial and immortal part of man, muſt the grand outline be traced. "God hath made man upright[b];" free from any errour of the *underſtanding*, or perverſe inclination of

[a] John iv. 24. [b] Eccles. vii. 29.

the

the *will*. Truth divine, iſſuing from the fountain of truth, was the ſole object and employment of the former: goodneſs pure and untainted, flowing from the ſame heavenly ſource, the excluſive purſuit and delight of the latter. Sin, as well in nature as in name, was completely unknown. Bleſſed ſtate of ſpotleſs innocence and unmingled joy! But it was of ſhort duration. "And the Lord God commanded the man, ſaying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayeſt freely eat. But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou ſhalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die[a]." In theſe words are propoſed the teſt of man's obedience. A plain and ſimple injunction is laid upon him, the full import of which he muſt of neceſſity comprehend. A penalty is annexed, which could not fail to repreſent to his mind every thing that is painful and horrible. He ſtill retains his integrity: he thoroughly underſtands the line of conduct which his duty requires of him: he is urged by a ſtrong propenſity to practiſe it. Now is

[a] Gen. ii. 16.

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the criſis for him to exerciſe that *full and abſolute dominion*, which he poſſeſſes, over his underſtanding and his will, and to direct them to their true and proper object, *acquieſcence in and obedience to the will of God.* Intereſting dilemma! Momentous interval! Man liſtens to the artful ſuggeſtions of the deceitful tempter, withdraws his allegiance, and ſins againſt his maker. By woful *experiment* he learns the difference between good and evil: good, now no longer in his power, the loſs of which he cannot but regret; evil, towards which he is ſenſible of an unceaſing bias, the fatal iſſues of which he cannot but deplore. A man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief, he feels himſelf obnoxious to ſin, to miſery, and to death.

This power of exerciſing the inherent properties of the ſoul, upon every object and occaſion, is generally expreſſed by a liberty of choice and action, and is allowed, even in this ſtate of degeneracy, to form a principal part of the human conſtitution. Exclude the ſpontaneous operation of this internal energy, and man would differ little or nothing from a brute:

brute: he would be degraded into the ſlave of inſtinct and external impreſſion. To think, ſpeak, and act, upon deliberation, by preference, from *motive*, is what chiefly ſets the human race above the reſt of the animal creation. To this ſelf-moving *, independent principle the prophet Moſes moſt urgently addreſſes himſelf in the following words. "I

* "And indeed whatever the deſtinies thereof may be, that are contained in the vaſt volume of an infinite and Almighty Mind; yet we evidently find *a liberty of will within ourſelves*, maugre the ſtubborn malice of all ſecond cauſes. And *Ariſtotle*, who ſeems to have diſputed ſo much againſt that *ſelf-motion* of ſouls, which his maſter before him had ſoberly maintained, does indeed but quarrel with that common ſenſe and experience, which we have of our ſouls; this *ſelf-motion* of the ſoul being nothing elſe, but that *innate force and power*, which it hath within it, to ſtir up thoſe thoughts and motions within itſelf, to which it finds itſelf moſt free." Smith's Select Diſcourſes, p. 77. "I might add a great deal more concerning *ſelf-moving or ſelf-determining power* in the mind of man, which yet, perhaps, would be better underſtood by a man's carefully conſulting the operations of his own mind. But this matter has of late been ſet in ſo clear a light, by an excellent perſon, (Dr. Clarke in his letters to Mr. Leibnitz) that I think there is no occaſion at preſent for enlarging upon it." Sermons at Boyle's Lectures, by Leng. Vol. III. page 73.

call

call heaven and earth to record this day againſt you, that I have ſet before you life and death, bleſſing and curſing; therefore chooſe life, that both thou and thy ſeed may live[a]." Let the moſt awful powers of heaven and earth bear witneſs this day, that I have ſet before you, in a clear and diſtinct point of view, the ſeveral particulars of your duty, and have, moreover, recommended them to your practice by the moſt exalted rewards and the moſt dreadful puniſhments. Therefore pauſe, weigh, determine, *chooſe*; exert that power of diſcrimination between what you ought to do, and what to avoid, which may produce a voluntary and intentional obedience, the ſource of all moral excellence, and the ſole juſt title to the favour of the Almighty ſearcher of hearts. "Behold, to obey," upon principle and from a genuine ſenſe of obligation, "is better than ſacrifice; and to hearken," with a real view of being informed as to what is your duty, "than the fat of rams."

If to the original properties of the human mind, a *clear underſtanding*, and an *unper-*

[a] Deut. xxx. 19.

verted

verted will, be added a *power of exerting them*, fully and effectually, in every inſtance where duty is concerned, the ſtructure is complete, wanting no addition, and incapable of further improvement. The ſoul of man thus becomes, 'a ſpiritual and immortal being, poſſeſſed of a power ſo to exerciſe the underſtanding, as to diſtinguiſh, in every caſe, what is true, right, and good, and ſo to apply the will, as to chooſe and act in compliance with this antecedent conviction.' But a liberty of choice and action includes alſo, in all created, and therefore imperfect beings, the ability of acting a quite contrary part, in oppoſition and contradiction to a better judgment. At the inſtigation of the grand apoſtate, as hath been before repreſented, man embraced the fatal privilege, and by ſo doing, conſiderably impaired the fair reſemblance of his Creator. In conſequence of the firſt tranſgreſſion, the power of the ſoul was to a great degree *weakened*, the underſtanding *darkened*, and the will *depraved*. The dominion of the ſpirit was of but a ſhort duration, and has been followed by an unnatural and prepoſterous

ſuperiority of the fleſh to the ſpirit, of the material to the immaterial part of our compoſition. All the diſpenſations of God, and every revelation of his will to man have had this ſole object in view, to reſtore the faculties of the ſoul to their original purity, and to reinſtate them in their natural predominance.

If man was created in the image of God, and by a contemplation of our preſent faculties, aided by the declarations of Scripture, we have been able to point out in what circumſtances that ſimilitude conſiſts; we may thence conclude, with all due reverence be it ſpoken, that God is 'a power to diſtinguiſh what is true and good in every inſtance, and an infallible practice of the ſame,' in an infinite degree, and an incomprehenſible, and therefore undeſcribable manner. Or, in other words, God is 'an eſſential and eternal act of power, wiſdom, and goodneſs,' of which * the power, wiſdom, and goodneſs

* "But ſince this ſelf-exiſting Being is, (as I ſaid before) much more reſembled by the ſoul, or inviſible part of

goodneſs of man is, though an inadequate, ſtill a real reſemblance. In our bleſſed Lord is ſaid to have "dwelt *all the fulneſs of the* GODHEAD bodily[a]." To adduce quotations from the ſacred writings, in order to eſtabliſh the power, wiſdom, and goodneſs of the only-begotten Son of God, who was "the brightneſs of his Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon[b];" and to whom "God gave not the Spirit by meaſure[c]" is unneceſſary, before any aſſembly of Chriſtians who are able to read the New Teſtament; much more, before the learned audience, which I am

of man, than by any thing outward or ſenſible, its attributes or perfections will be more fully repreſented, and better underſtood, by being compared with the correſpondent powers or perfections of the mind of man. Let us, therefore, briefly conſider the human mind or ſoul, with reſpect to thoſe attributes of *power, wiſdom, and goodneſs*, the perfection of which we attribute to the Supreme Being. And we ſhall find in man, not merely the effects of them, ſuch as are diſcernible in all the parts of nature, as I have before ſhewn, but likewiſe ſome *image* or *reſemblance* of the attributes themſelves, or a capacity in the mind of man to exerciſe them in a limited degree." Sermons at Boyle's Lectures, by Leng. Vol. iii. p. 73.

[a] Col. ii. 9. [b] Heb. i. 3. [c] John iii. 34.

now

now addreſſing. The whole of his moſt laborious and uſeful life, from the day on which he entered upon his miniſtry to the moment before his aſcenſion into heaven, was one continued and grand diſplay of theſe ſublime and adorable perfections.

When we further conſider the primary properties of the human ſoul in their original ſtate of purity, namely, 'the free and vigorous exerciſe of power in the proſecution of wiſdom and goodneſs,' they ſeem to bear a ſtrong reſemblance of the three divine perſons of the ever-bleſſed Trinity. For though in the perſons of the Godhead, "none is afore or after other, none is greater or leſs than another," in any one eſſential circumſtance *, ſtill Power appears to be the more

* They, (the three perſons in the Godhead) are alſo diſtinguiſhed by thoſe properties, which are *external*, as having relation to the creatures, eſpecially to the members of the church; ſo the creation of the world is in Scripture more particularly aſcribed to the *Father*, the redemption to the *Son*, and the ſanctification of God's people to the *Holy Ghoſt*. Collyer, Vol. ii. p. 41. St. Paul expreſsly

more appropriate attribute of the Father, Wiſdom of the Son, and Goodneſs of the Holy Ghoſt.

Power is the origin of all being, the prime mover and final completer of all creation. Some ancient ſages were of opinion, that to call any thing into exiſtence, which before had none, was a matter in itſelf and utterly impracticable: not aware, that with God all things are poſſible. Power is the primary and characteriſtic attribute of the Deity; ſo much ſo, that it may almoſt truly and literally be aſſerted, that God is power, and power is God. Human power is ſeen in that ſway, which every one, who has not baſely reſigned his native independence, is conſcious that he poſſeſſes over the operations of his own mind, and the motions of his own body. It affords an ability to pauſe, to view, to compare, to prefer, and in conſequence to act from the ſole energy of internal conviction, according to the

expreſsly calls the ſalvation of man by "Jeſus Chriſt and him crucified, the wiſdom of God in a myſtery, even the hidden wiſdom, which God ordained before the world, unto our glory." 1 Cor. ii, 2, 7.

real

real nature and the intrinſic value of the ſeveral objects which ſolicit the attention. Man's deliberate and intentional deeds are *his* creation: and that rational ſelf-control, with which he feels himſelf endued, is at once the moſt ſubſtantial plea, and the moſt ſuitable qualification for his dominion over inferior creatures.

This ſtupendous and inexplicable property, originally and independently veſted in the Father, was communicated by the Father to the Son, and by the Father and the Son to the Holy Ghoſt, not gradually, and in time, after the manner of men, but inſtantaneouſly, in eternity, and * from everlaſting. The very notion of a Father includes in it a *ſupremacy of power*. As a proof of † the preeminence of

* "Whoſe goings forth have been from of old, from everlaſting." Micah V. 2.

† "He (Doctor Clarke) preſented a paper on July the 2nd to the upper Houſe, in which he formally and ſolemnly, under his own hand, declared "his opinion" to be, "that the Son of God was eternally begotten by the eternal incomprehenſible *power* and *will* of the Father;

of the Father, the firſt article of the Apoſtles Creed is, " I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth." " And Jeſus ſaid I am; and ye ſhall ſee the Son of man ſitting on the right hand of *power*, and coming in the clouds of heaven [a]. Hereafter ſhall the Son of man ſit on the right hand *of the*

[a] Mark xiv. 62.

and that the Holy Spirit was likewiſe eternally derived from the Father, by and through the Son, according to the eternal incomprehenſible *power* and *will* of the Father." He thus aſſerted the divinity of the Son and Holy Ghoſt in the cleareſt and moſt concluſive manner; by affirming the coeternity of the Son with the Father, and the coeternity of the Holy Ghoſt with both. There cannot poſſibly, in all the compaſs of theology, be found any ſtronger and preciſer ſymbol of Divinity, than a continuity of exiſtence, running parallel with the exiſtence of God the Father himſelf, and extending backwards with it up to the commencing point of a never-commencing eternity." Whitaker's Origin of Arianiſm, p. 465. In the above paſſage Mr. Whitaker means to prove the prevarication of Dr. Clarke, by his admitting, in direct contradiction to what he had before advanced in his Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity, the coeternity of the Son and of the Holy Ghoſt with the Father, and conſequently their Divinity. But it equally aſcertains, that the Father is the fountain of power in the Deity.

power

power of God[b]. When he had by himſelf purged our ſins, he ſat down on the right-hand *of the Majeſty on high*[c]. We have ſuch an high prieſt, who is ſet on the right hand *of the throne of the Majeſty in the heavens*[d]. So then, after the Lord had ſpoke to him, he was received up into heaven, and ſat on the right hand *of God*[e]." The ſeveral phraſes, " the right hand of power, of the power of God, of the Majeſty on high, of the throne of the Majeſty in the heavens, of God," unitedly denote, that our bleſſed Lord aſcended up on high, in order to reaſſume that ſtate of power, majeſty, and dominion, which, before he came down from heaven, he had poſſeſſed from all eternity, at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty, who is the ſource of all power in the Godhead.

The diſcovery of truth is the grand object of the underſtanding. Truth, as far as it relates to human apprehenſion and expreſſion, is the conformity of our ideas and notions with

[b] Luke xxii. 69. [c] Heb. i. 3. [d] Heb. viii. 1.
[e] Mark xvi. 19.

the real nature of things, and of our words with our ideas and notions. Wiſdom, which is ever founded on truth, is the deviſing of the beſt and moſt ſuitable means for the production of a determinate end: and the more uſeful and excellent the end, the more valuable and deſirable is that wiſdom, which leads to it. Religion is the appointed method of acquiring the favour of God, and is therefore the moſt important of all truth, the moſt conſummate of all wiſdom.

If we look in the word of truth, we ſhall find numerous intimations of the Son of God's having an undoubted title to that high endowment *Truth*, and its natural concomitant in all undepraved ſpirits, *Wiſdom*. With regard to the former, take the following, out of many ſimilar paſſages: "For the law was given by Moſes; but grace and *truth* came by Jeſus Chriſt [a]. But now ye ſeek to kill me, a man that hath told you *the truth*, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham [b]. Jeſus ſaith unto him, I am the way, and *the*

[a] John i. 17. [b] John viii. 40.

truth,

truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me[c]. To this end was I born, and for this cauſe came I into the world, that I ſhould bear witneſs unto *the truth*. Every one that is of *the truth* heareth my voice[d]." That the term, Wiſdom, is equally applicable to the Son may be inferred from his appellation in the New Teſtament, which in our tranſlation is rendered, * THE WORD; but which in the original ſignifies, The Word, Speech, or Reaſon. Now the faculty of reaſon is the ſource of all the wiſdom of which man is naturally capable; and his ſole mode of communicating his knowledge is, by oral or written words. The property of Wiſdom is aſſigned to our Lord frequently and decidedly both in the Old and New Teſtaments. "The Lord poſſeſſed me," ſays *Wiſdom* herſelf, "in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was ſet up from everlaſting,

[c] John xiv. 6. [d] John xviii. 37.

* See ſome learned obſervations upon the true import of, *The Word*, and *The Word of God*, in Dr. Jackſon's Works, Tom iii. p. 801. &c. See alſo, Scott's Chriſtian Life, on the Divinity and Incarnation of our Saviour.

from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were ſettled, before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the higheſt part of the duſt of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he ſet a compaſs upon the face of the depth: when he eſtabliſhed the clouds above: when he ſtrengthened the fountains of the deep: when he gave to the ſea his decree, that the waters ſhould not paſs his commandment, when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him[a]." Parallel to this paſſage of the wiſe king of Iſrael is the following one of the beloved diſciple: "In the beginning was *the Word*, and *the Word* was with God, and *the Word* was God. The ſame was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made[b]. And the ſpirit of the Lord ſhall reſt upon him,

[a] Prov. viii. 22—30. [b] John i. 1, 2, 3.

(the

(the branch) the ſpirit of *wiſdom and underſtanding*, the ſpirit of counſel and might, the ſpirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord[a]. * In whom," that is, in Chriſt, "are hid all the treaſures of *wiſdom and knowledge*[b]." By the preaching of himſelf, and of his Apoſtles, he hath made known to us the whole will of God: and in his moſt holy and ſpotleſs life he reduced to practice the divine leſſons he taught, leaving an example of true and † heavenly wiſdom, for the imitation of his faithful ſervants in all ages of the church.

[a] Iſaiah xi. 2. [b] Col. ii. 3.

* Even from the Goſpel of the bleſſed Jeſus, *in whom are hid all the* nobleſt and moſt deſirable treaſures of *wiſdom and knowledge*, himſelf being the *incarnate wiſdom of God*. Doddridge.

† "But the wiſdom that is from above is firſt pure, then peaceable, gentle, and eaſy to be intreated, full of mercy, and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocriſy." James iii. 17. Who does not recogniſe, in this charming ſketch of celeſtial wiſdom, the chief lineaments of the amiable character of our bleſſed Lord and Maſter, during his ſhort reſidence amongſt the ſinful race of mortal men?

Moral

Moral goodneſs, which is the more immediate offspring of the will, conſiſts in a ſteady and uniform adoption and execution of every meaſure in our power, for the improvement of ourſelves and others, and for the promotion of our own and their real and laſting happineſs. In all rational agents, this bleſſed effect is produced by a ſubmiſſion and obedience to the will of God, in all their wiſhes, deſigns, and enterprizes. Hence ariſes, in this world, that peace of God which paſſeth all underſtanding, and in the next, a fulneſs of joy in the preſence of God, and at his right hand pleaſures for evermore.

That *Goodneſs*, in this ſenſe, is the property of the third perſon of the Trinity, may likewiſe be conjectured from his name, *The* HOLY *Spirit*. He is himſelf the Spirit of holineſs, and, by his preventing and cooperating grace, enlightening the underſtanding and influencing the will and affections, the cauſe of holineſs, the beginner and finiſher of every good work in the ſons of men. This ſacred office, of purifying and meliorating the heart of man, is ſo abundantly aſcribed to the Holy Ghoſt in the New Teſtament, that it is more

difficult

difficult to ſelect than to meet with paſſages to the purpoſe. " By the grace of God, I am what I am [a]. The fruit of the Spirit is in all *goodneſs*, and *righteouſneſs*, and truth [b]. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-ſuffering, gentleneſs, *goodneſs*, faith, meekneſs, temperance; againſt ſuch there is no law [c]. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the *ſons of God* [d]." The true diſciples of Chriſt are thoſe, whom " God hath from the beginning choſen unto ſalvation, through *ſanctification* of the Spirit and belief of the truth [e]. Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through *ſanctification* of the Spirit unto obedience, and ſprinkling of the blood of Jeſus Chriſt [f]."

I hope it will not be thought, that I deviate too far from my ſubject, if I make a ſtill further claim upon your attention, whilſt I am endeavouring to point out to you, what I take to be, a *material* emblem of the Trinity, that

[a] 1 Cor. xv. 10. [b] Epheſ. v. 9. [c] Gal. v. 22, 3.
[d] Rom. viii. 14. [e] 2 Theſſ. ii. 13. [f] 1 Peter i. 2.

noble

noble luminary, * THE SUN; which, with no very great impropriety of ſpeech, may be denominated *the ſoul* of our ſyſtem of heavenly bodies, as it is the center of their motion, retains them in their reſpective orbits, and im-

* Οπερ εν τοις αισθητοις ο ηλιος τουτο εν τοις νοητοις ο Θεος. As the Sun upholds, enlightens, and cheriſhes the ſyſtem of material bodies: in the ſame manner God Almighty acts upon, and influences the various orders of ſpiritual exiſtences. See Cheyne's Philoſophical Principles of Religion. p. 46, 7. &c. "Indeed, in the order of nature, a father, as being the begetter or producer, is to be ſuppoſed to have a being firſt, or prior to the ſon begotten or produced; and yet the Son of God is equally infinite with the Father; for in this argument we have nothing to do with the *ordinary courſe of nature*. The eſſence which God always had without beginning, without beginning he did communicate, being as well always Father, as always God; of which we have a *faint reſemblance in the Sun*, which is the producer of heat and light, and yet is heat and light as ancient as itſelf, nor can one conceive a moment in which the ſun was without them, though we cannot account for it; no more can we comprehend how God ſhould have his being from himſelf, or from all eternity; and yet that is not leſs true." Collyer, Vol. ii. p. 37.

parts

parts to them heat * and light, the inſtrumental cauſes of life and beauty.

Wonderful indeed muſt be the internal *Power* of the Sun, in order to regulate the motions of the moſt diſtant of the planets, which compoſe our ſyſtem, and to diſpenſe light and heat throughout a ſphere of ſo widely extended a circumference. When we reflect upon † the number of miles, which interpoſe between Saturn and the center of his motion; that he ſhould be in any degree affected by a body placed at ſo immenſe an interval ſeems almoſt incredible. But Almighty power ‡ can impreſs an image of itſelf, as well upon

* Whether the matter of heat and light be originally reſident in, and conſtantly emitted from the large body of the Sun; or whether theſe ſubſtances have a proper and independent exiſtence, and the Sun acts merely as the exciter and propagator of them; are queries which demand the diſcuſſion of the phyſiologiſt, but which do not immediately claim the attention of the divine, who may be allowed to adopt the popular and generally-received notions on theſe and ſimilar ſubjects.

† More than nine hundred millions.

‡ "So attraction or gravitation is not eſſential to matter, but ſeems rather an *original impreſs*, which continues by

upon material ſubſtances as immaterial beings. "He is the Lord God, Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come [a]."

There is ſo ſtrong and obvious a reſemblance between the *Light* of the Sun and *Truth*, that the light of truth, the light of reaſon, the light of knowledge, are modes of ſpeech, almoſt as uſual, as though they were not metaphorical ones. Hence alſo the phraſes, a brilliant thought, a luminous diſcovery, the throwing of light upon a ſubject, a lucid interval, with many others of a like nature. Before our bleſſed Lord came down from heaven, he is deſcribed as * "the *brightneſs* of his Father's glory [b]." That "form" which is ſaid in Daniel,

by virtue of the omnipotent activity in the divine nature; of which it is a *copy or image* in the low degree that is ſuitable to a groſs creature." Cheyne, p. 40, 1.

[a] Rev. iv. 8. [b] Heb. i. 3.

* "Even in ſcenes of earth, they might ſee ſufficient to illuſtrate the mode of divine generation, when theology had aſcertained the fact. In all effects that are *voluntary*, the cauſe muſt be prior to the effect; as the father is to the ſon

Daniel, [b] to be "like the Son of God," might probably be a *luminous* appendage diffuſed either round his whole body, or at leaſt encircling his ſacred head. The prophet Malachi expreſsly calls him "*The Sun* of righteouſneſs [c]." St. John aſſerts in the Revelations, that "his countenance was *as the Sun ſhineth in his ſtrength* [d]." He ſays of himſelf, "I am the *bright* and morning *ſtar* [e]." At his transfiguration "his countenance was *like lightning*, and his raiment *white as ſnow* [f]." St. Paul, in the account of his converſion, which he delivered before Agrippa, deſcribes the dazzling

ſon in human generation. But, in all that are *neceſſary*, the effect muſt be coeval with the cauſe, as the ſtream is with the fountain, and light with the ſun. Had the ſun been eternal in its duration, light would have been coeternal with it. Were the fountain from everlaſting, the ſtream would be equally from everlaſting too. And the Son of God, in the faith and confeſſion of the Jews, was the ſecond Jehovah, or the Mediate God of the univerſe; an eternal De-rivation from the Eternal Fountain of Deity, an everlaſting *De-radiation from the Everlaſting Sun of Divinity in God the Father.*" Whitaker. page 174, 5.

[b] Dan. iii. 25. [c] Mal. iv. 2. [d] Rev. i. 16.
[e] Rev. xxii. 16. [f] Matt. xxviii. 3.

ſplendour,

ſplendour, that ſtruck his aſtoniſhed eye-balls, in the following words: "At mid-day, O king, I ſaw in the way a *light* from heaven, *above the brightneſs of the Sun*, ſhining round about me, and them which journeyed with me[a]. I am the *light of the* world[b]," ſaith our bleſſed Lord. "That was *the true light*, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world[c]. A *light* to lighten the gentiles, and *the glory* of thy people Iſrael[d]. I am come a *light* into the world, that, whoſoever believeth on me, ſhould not abide in darkneſs[e]. But all things that are reproved, are made manifeſt by the light; for whatſoever doth make manifeſt is light. Wherefore he ſaith, Awake, thou that ſleepeſt, and ariſe from the dead, *and Chriſt ſhall give thee light*[f]."

That *Heat* is no unſuitable repreſentation of the operative powers of the mind, comprehended under the general term, the *Will* or affections, may be inferred from theſe and

[a] Acts xxvi. 13. [b] John viii. 12. [c] John i. 9. [d] Luke ii. 32. [e] John xii. 46. [f] Epheſ. v. 13, 14.

ſimilar

ſimilar figurative applications of it common to all languages; a warm heart, the warmth of the affections, a warm advocate, a lukewarm friend, a hot temper; all denoting a more or leſs violent propenſity or attachment to ſome perſon, or thing, or mode of action. " * And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters [a]." By hovering over, or, as it were, brooding over the ſurface of the deep, he infuſed into it a prolific warmth and energy. " I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whoſe ſhoes I am not worthy to bear: he ſhall baptize you with *the Holy Ghoſt and with fire* [b]. And Jeſus, when he was baptized, went up ſtraightway out of the

[a] Gen. i. 2. [b] Matt. iii. 11.

* " We may obſerve in fire two great operations or effects; firſt, heat; ſecondly, light. It ſhould ſeem, that active element, as it is commonly called, or rather, that powerful vigorous entity, or *Vis ignea, lucida, & calefactiva*, was produced by the incubation of the Spirit of God upon the face of the abyſs, and diffuſed through the confuſed particles of the *Materia Chaotica*; and that it was the great inſtrument which that Spirit did both communicate and uſe for the preparation, digeſtion, and agitation, of that matter," &c. Hales, page 294.

water; and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he ſaw the Spirit of God deſcending like a dove, and lighting upon him [a]." Some learned interpreters of this paſſage ſuppoſe, that a *lambent flame** came down from heaven with *a hovering dove-like motion*; others, that it was a *bright flame* in the *ſhape of a dove*. "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as *of fire*, and it ſat upon each of them [b]." The Holy Spirit, in a fiery appearance, reſted, as in the preceding inſtance, upon the Apoſtles, in order to purify and illuminate their ſouls, and to inflame them with an ardent attachment to God and his glory. "It is the Spirit that *quickeneth* [c]:" that reanimateth the ſoul in a ſtate of torpidity and death. "*Quench* not the Spirit [d]." Wherefore I put thee in remembrance, that thou † *ſtir up* the gift of God, which is in thee, by the putting on of my hands [e]."

[a] Matt. iii. 16. [b] Acts ii. 3. [c] John vi. 63.
[d] 1 Theſſ. v. 19. [e] 2 Tim. i. 6.

* Doddridge.

† Αναζωπυρεω. Ignem jam conditum & ſopitum ſuſcito. Eraſmus.

Having

Having ſuggeſted to your conſideration, that thoſe properties, which we denominate the divine attributes, are nothing more than diſtant and imperfect reſemblances of the inſcrutable nature of the Deity; that the image of God, in which man was originally created, conſiſted in a power devoted to the proſecution of truth and righteouſneſs; that in the primary qualities of the human ſoul may be traced an analogical repreſentation of the Holy Trinity; and that in the material ſun is contained a far leſs perfect emblem of the ſame chriſtian myſtery; I will conclude this awful and intereſting ſubject with a few obſervations by way of inference.

Of men, in this their depraved ſtate, ſome are ſunk ſo deep into the abyſs of iniquity, that they ſeem to retain little beſides the name and figure, which can give them any title to the appellation of human beings. The divine image is almoſt, if not entirely, effaced, and that of the Wicked One ſubſtituted in its room. When we reflect upon the vaſt variety of intermediate ſteps, between abandoned wickedneſs, and the utmoſt degree of per-

fection at which mortal man can arrive, when aided by the Holy Spirit of God, and even then, how many errors and imperfections he is ſtill ſubject to; one is almoſt induced, in a ſtrain of deſperation, to exclaim, "Lord, what is man, that thou haſt ſuch reſpect unto him, or the ſon of man, that thou ſo regardeſt him[a]?" But when we view him in his primeval ſtate, with an underſtanding unimpaired, and a will unperverted, with no knowledge of, nor the leaſt propenſity to any thing but what is good; we then behold him moving in a much more elevated ſphere, "a little lower than the angels, and crowned with glory and worſhip[b]."

For the purpoſe of renewing the divine image, of creating a ſecond time the powers of the ſoul "in knowledge[c], in righteouſneſs and true holineſs[d]," God never left himſelf without a witneſs amongſt the poſterity of Adam. To the holy patriarchs, both before and after the flood, and then to his choſen people, the Jews, and through their diſperſions,

[a] Pſalm cxliv. 3. [b] Pſalm viii. 3. [c] Col. iii. 10.
[d] Epheſ. iv. 24.

to

to other nations, God communicated a knowledge of himſelf and of his righteous will, by divers expreſs declarations, by miraculous protections and deliverances of thoſe who obſerved his laws, and by terrible puniſhments inflicted upon obſtinate offenders. Immediately after the fall, a promiſe was made, that the ſeed of the woman ſhould bruiſe the ſerpent's head. And this primary annunciation of the Meſſiah was frequently alluded to and confirmed, at one time more obſcurely, at another more clearly, by types and by prophecies, to the very period of its completion. "When the fulneſs of time was come, God, by his determinate counſel and foreknowledge [a], ſent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of ſons [b]." The only-begotten Son of God, full of grace and truth, left the boſom of his Father, diveſted himſelf of the glory which he had with him before the world was, aſſumed the form of a ſervant, and in this ſtate of humiliation, exhibited a perfect

[a] Acts ii. 23. [b] Gal. iv. 4, 5.

model

model of * ſelf-reſignation to the will of his Father: in the mean time, ſpeaking as never man ſpake, even the words of eternal life; uttering, as occaſions and circumſtances offered, thoſe precepts of inward purity and univerſal holineſs, which, if conſcientiouſly adopted, and uniformly practiſed, will prepare and fit the ſoul for the converſation of ſaints and angels in the kingdom of heaven. He likewiſe gave a commiſſion to his more immediate followers, to "go and make diſciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt[a]." The Holy Spirit of God, in the early ages of the Church, imparted to the Prophets, and in the latter times, to the Apoſtles, a degree of wiſdom and courage, which none of their adverſaries, neither men nor devils, were able to gainſay or reſiſt. And the ſelf-ſame Spirit, to this very day, illuminates, comforts and ſupports every faithful diſciple of Jeſus Chriſt! "What! know ye

[a] Matt. xxviii. 19.

* See an excellent treatiſe on The Great Duty of Self-Reſignation to the Divine Will, by the late learned and pious John Worthington, D. D.

not

not that your body is *the temple of the Holy Ghoſt*, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own[a]? Jeſus anſwered, and ſaid unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and *we* will come unto him, *and make our abode* with him[b]." Here is indeed a moſt aſtoniſhing inſtance of mercy and condeſcenſion! * The three divine perſonages taking up their reſidence in the ſoul of man! But we cannot ſuppoſe, that this gracious intercourſe can ever take place, except when the original image of the Deity is ſo far reſtored, by a life of faith unfeigned and willing obedience, that there will be a *congruity*, a certain degree of *correſpondency*, between the temper and diſpoſition of the human ſoul, and the in-

[a] 1 Cor. vi. 19. [b] John xiv. 23.

* The union and cooperation of the three perſons in the renewal of the ſoul of man, is an irrefragable proof of their being equally divine. If either the Son or the Holy Ghoſt were not God, it would be impoſſible for them to bear a part in this gracious work, to which the Deity alone is competent. To ſuppoſe that our Bleſſed Lord, as a *mere man*, could be capable of ſo exalted an employment, is too abſurd to ſtand in need of any refutation.

effable perfections of the Holy Trinity. "For what fellowſhip hath righteouſneſs with unrighteouſneſs? And what communion hath light with darkneſs? And what concord hath Chriſt with Belial[a]?"

To reſtore the divine image in the ſoul of man is, with the concurrence of God's Holy Spirit, the more peculiar province of the Miniſters of the goſpel. "We are the ambaſſadors of Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us: we pray you in Chriſt's ſtead, Be ye reconciled to God[b]." How exalted, how momentous a privilege! Whilſt the forms of temporal government are in a conſtant courſe of change and revolution; whilſt crowns, and the wearers of them, are daily buried in the duſt; we are the miniſters of a kingdom, which hath foundations, which cannot be moved, whoſe maker and builder is God. May this conſideration ſink deep into our hearts. Ever bearing in mind the ineſtimable importance of our charge, let it be our firſt care and moſt earneſt endeavour to ad-

[a] 2 Cor. vi. 14. [b] 2 Cor. v. 20.

here

here to the advice of the Apoſtle. "Take heed unto thyſelf, and unto thy doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this, thou ſhalt both ſave thyſelf, and them that hear thee [a]. Preach the word. Be inſtant in ſeaſon, out of ſeaſon; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-ſuffering and doctrine [b]." Should we ever feel ourſelves diſpoſed to magnify our office, and on account of the preeminence of our ſpiritual labours, to fancy ourſelves ſuperior to ſome of our fellow-chriſtians; we ſhall ſee reaſon, on this head, to rejoice with trembling, when we recollect, what ought ever to be preſent to our thoughts, that "to whom much is given, of him ſhall much be required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will aſk the more [c]."

To conclude. "May* the *Power* of the Father govern and protect, may the *Wiſdom* of the Son teach and enlighten, may the *Influence* of the Holy Ghoſt renew and quicken" the

[a] 1 Tim. iv. 16. [b] 2 Tim. iv. 2. [c] Luke xii. 48.

* Devotions of Biſhop Andrews, Page 152.

miniſters

miniſters of the goſpel, all chriſtian people, the whole race of mankind!

To FATHER, SON, *and* HOLY GHOST, *our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, three perſons and* ONE EVERLASTING GOD, *be aſcribed, as is moſt due, all honour and glory, thankſgiving and praiſe, now, and for evermore.* AMEN.

FINIS.

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